

MAIN STREET PROJECT

Pedestrian and Vehicular Improvements to Main Street Andover

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Main Street Project is a pedestrian and vehicular improvement project along Main Street from Stevens Street south to Wheeler Street. The federal and state governments committed to fund 3.8 million dollars of improvements including sidewalk and roadway reconstruction to improve drainage, signalization changes to improve vehicular flow, crosswalk and sidewalk upgrades to improve pedestrian safety, and intersection alignment for vehicular safety. The citizens of Andover appropriated over \$500,000 to upgrade the existing street lighting to historic light poles, provide pavers for the crosswalks, install additional park benches, and provide other amenities to enhance the appearance of the downtown. The project is expected to take 2 years to complete. During construction, both directions of traffic flow will remain open, however parking restrictions will take effect depending on the location of construction. Construction will occur during daytime business hours. The project will have temporary impacts, however when the project is complete, Main Street Andover will be an attractive pedestrian friendly place for those looking for a comfortable, safe and enjoyable experience.

PROJECT HISTORY

In 1997, Design Consultants, Inc. submitted a proposal to the Massachusetts Highway Department (Mass Highway) on behalf of the Town of Andover for funding to improve the traffic flow and increase pedestrian safety along Main Street (State Route 28) in Andover, Massachusetts. Several issues prompted the need for the project, including inefficient traffic flow, haphazard crosswalk locations, handicap accessibility, deteriorated sidewalks, poor drainage, unattractive street lighting and insufficient seating.

The Board of Selectmen created the Main Street Committee in January 2001 as an advisory committee to provide a forum for local businesses, citizens, and government to discuss the project and make recommendations. Throughout the review process, Design Consultants worked closely with both the Main Street Committee and Mass Highway to resolve most of the issues. Numerous public meetings and an advertised Public Hearing were held to solicit comment from the general public and local businesses.

The Main Street Committee's goals were to identify opportunities and obstacles associated with Main Street; seek community consensus on public and private actions; maintain a robust and lively Main Street during construction; improve its functional and aesthetic strengths; and safely accommodate pedestrians and vehicles now and in the future.

In 1999 and 2002, the Town of Andover appropriated funding for streetscape items such as landscaping, streetlights, crosswalks, and park benches to improve overall safety and to revitalize the downtown. Additional Mass Highway review and securing federal and state funding prolonged the project to 2005.

In March 2006 funding was secured and the 100% design plans were submitted to Mass Highway in June 2006. The project is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2006 and will take approximately 2 years to complete..



CITIZENS, CHARACTER AND COMMERCE

Citizens

Main Street Andover is the primary gathering place for its citizens -- shoppers, residents, students, employees, and visitors. It is a social place. It is a place for everyone and should be planned and developed as an attractive, safe pedestrian environment. Its design, maintenance, regulation, and management should result in an environment that is secure, welcoming, and free of physical, cultural, and social barriers.

Character

The identity of Main Street and the surrounding neighborhoods is founded on the character and design of its historical architecture and landscapes. They should be preserved, emphasized, and used as a primary source of downtown strength and vitality.

Commerce

Business activity is the foundation and the strength of Andover's Main Street. Commercial uses require adequate space, facilities, and parking. Improvements to the functional infrastructure of Main Street should be continually fostered. It is vital to local businesses' longevity to bring people into downtown Andover by way of Main Street. This is primarily accomplished by automobile, but also by bus, bicycle, and train. Therefore, vehicular movement should be efficient, systematic, and as trouble-free as possible.

BENEFITS OF THE MAIN STREET PROJECT

Once the Main Street Project is complete, the downtown will be easier to navigate for pedestrians of all ages and abilities. The crosswalks will provide visible and safer places for people to cross the street, most notably at Elm Square and Memorial Hall Library.

The signals will be synchronized to move traffic safely and efficiently through downtown. The signals will have coordinated red-light systems for police and fire emergencies. The alignment of the pavement and sidewalks will drain more effectively. The sidewalks, crosswalk ramps, and crosswalks will make it easier for the public to maneuver downtown. The signals will have walk buttons and audio signals. There will be new trees, park benches for seating, and attractive historic lighting in scale to the buildings.

The downtown will be attractive to patrons and provide for a comfortable and enjoyable shopping experience. Outside downtown shopping should be distinctive from indoor or strip mall shopping. The improvements to Main Street will provide for this unique atmosphere.

A vital Main Street retains and creates jobs at the same time strengthening the tax base. It protects property values throughout the Town of Andover. It increases the community's options for good and services. Lastly, Main Street Andover is a symbol of the Town's economic health, the quality of life and pride of its residents. It reinforces the fact that Main Street Andover is important to Andover residents.

What can you do?

Shop in the stores and patronize businesses during construction!!!

For more information on the Main Street Project please contact:

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"Main Street is the heart of the community; the traditional and modern focus for commercial, civic, cultural, and social activity. Its condition serves as an indicator of the health, capacity and self-regard of the entire community."

~The National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Streets Program~